

**EXTERNAL REVIEW TIPS**

As part of the Program Review process, programs are required to attain an external review. Here are a few suggestions and guidelines to help you select, schedule, and work with an external reviewer.

***How to select a qualified external reviewer/team***

*The reviewer(s) should have:*

- Disciplinary knowledge and experience related to your degree program(s)
- Experience with programs similar to yours and institutions similar to UNC in mission, scope, and size
- Evaluation experience
- Independence and objectivity
- Understanding of current issues and trends within the discipline and higher education

*Additional characteristics to consider:*

- Knowledge of accreditation and/or professional standards for your discipline
- A mix of teaching and administrative experience
- Expertise in an area or focus your program is considering developing or adding in the future

***Finding a reviewer***

*Consider the following sources of information for finding a qualified reviewer:*

- Professional accrediting agencies or societies
- Faculty and/or administrators from peer programs
- Recommendations from UNC faculty and colleagues

***Preparing for the review***

Develop a clear understanding and written description of what you want and need from the reviewer prior to the visit. Create a list of particular questions you'd like to have answered and issues that must be addressed. Some colleges have developed a set of questions, so check with your Dean's office. Refer to the External Review Checklist for specific tasks that should be completed before the reviewer arrives on campus.

***During the review***

*The following activities will be appreciated by your reviewer:*

- Provide an agenda that includes times, meeting locations, and the names of people s/he will be meeting.
- Identify someone from the program to act as a campus guide during the visit.
- If possible, provide an office or workspace for the reviewer to use and have available copies of any documents or resource materials s/he has requested.
- Arrange for faculty, staff, and/or students to have lunch and/or dinner with the reviewer.

***After the review***

- Expect to receive the reviewer's report within 30 days of the campus visit.
- Be prepared to send any additional information s/he might request to complete the review.
- After you have received the reviewer's report, complete paperwork for the reviewer's fees and expenses.
- Prepare a response that will be included in your program's self study report. In particular, address any factual errors and respond to any recommendations your program does not endorse.



## EXTERNAL REVIEW CHECKLIST

### **Before the review**

- Define the purpose and scope of the review
- Work with the Dean to select a reviewer and establish a budget
- Request funding from the Office of Assessment and prepare contract (Standard Services Invoice)
- Develop a timeline for the review
- Verify travel arrangements and itinerary
- Develop a list of written questions the program wishes answered
- Determine what documents and information the reviewer would like to have in advance
- Send documents and information to the reviewer, including some or all of the following:
  - Program's web address
  - Current self-study
  - College catalog
  - Course syllabi
  - Faculty vitae
  - 5-year program data – course enrollments, numbers of majors / minors, etc.
  - Department/program budgets
  - List of library journal and book holdings relevant to the program
  - Handbooks, program policies, newsletters
  - Assessment measures used by the program
  - Results of student learning outcome assessments, program satisfaction studies, alumni surveys (may use TracDat Program Review Report)
- Schedule times and locations for the reviewer to meet with program faculty, students, the Dean, and any others you or the reviewer identify. If the reviewer has provided a list of questions s/he intends to discuss, provide these in advance.

### **The review visit itinerary**

- Schedule an initial meeting with key stakeholders to acquaint all parties and review the itinerary (brief)
- Conduct individual and/or group visits with faculty, staff, students, dean, and any others you've identified
- Provide time for solo campus walk about
- Arrange for one or more meals with faculty and/or students
- Conduct debriefing meeting or exit interview (preview what final report might look like)

### **After the review**

- Expect reviewer's report within 30 days of the review
- Complete paperwork for the reviewer's fees and expenses
- Provide the report to program faculty and solicit feedback and information about any factual errors
- Address reviewer's recommendations in the program's comprehensive self study report

Checklist based on (Howery, 1999)



# Program Review External Consultant Funding Request Form

The Office of Assessment has been allocated \$10,000 to support contracting with external reviewers for five year program review. Programs seeking to bring a reviewer to campus may apply for up to \$1,000 to assist with the reviewer's fees and travel expenses.

Programs should submit requests during the fiscal year in which the external review will occur. Funds will be distributed based upon the order in which requests are received. Reviewers must meet state and university guidelines for independent contractors (see <http://www.unco.edu/acctservices/acctpay/>). To request funding, complete this form and return to Kim Black, Director of Assessment, Campus Box 9.

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Name of Program: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ College: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Program review final report due date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of consultant campus visit/review: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer Name/Title/Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Amount of request: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the total cost for this reviewer? \_\_\_\_\_

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I support this funding request and certify that the reviewer has no known conflict of interest that would affect the review of this program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chair or School Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

